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# Research on the Integration Mechanism of Yellow River Culture into College Korean Language Teaching in a Cross-Cultural Context

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**Abstract:** Against the backdrop of normalized cross-cultural communication, foreign language teaching is inseparable from cultural integration. Yellow River culture is in urgent need of innovative approaches for inheritance and international dissemination, yet cross-border integration research between Yellow River culture and college Korean language teaching remains a blank in existing studies. Supported by relevant theories, this study constructs a three-dimensional integration mechanism of "Pedagogical Transformation of Cultural Content - Classroom Embedding - Practical Dissemination" to address the dilemmas of insufficient local cultural connotation in Korean teaching and a single carrier for Yellow River culture dissemination. The research confirms that the integration has dual values: it can improve teaching quality, empower cultural communication, and lay a foundation for Sino-Korean cultural exchanges. It also points out research limitations, proposes future directions, enriches relevant research, and provides a new path for the inheritance and dissemination of Yellow River culture.

**Keywords:** Yellow River Culture; College Korean Language Teaching; Cross-Cultural Communication; Integration Mechanism; Cultural Inheritance

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## 1. Introduction

With the increasingly close exchanges and cooperation among countries around the world, economic globalization and cultural diversity are advancing in tandem. Cross-cultural communication has become the norm, and foreign language teaching is inextricably linked to cultural integration. As the core carrier of cultural dissemination, language not only fulfills a communicative function but also shoulders the important mission of cultural inheritance. As a treasure of fine traditional Chinese culture, the Yellow River cultural heritage is currently confronted with practical challenges such as inheritance gaps and insufficient international recognition. Its cross-cultural dissemination and dynamic inheritance are in urgent need of innovative approaches. Therefore, integrating the Yellow River culture into college Korean language teaching in a cross-cultural context holds significant value: it can not only inject unique cultural connotations into Korean language teaching, helping students enhance their language application and cross-cultural communication competence, but also promote the international dissemination of the Yellow River culture by taking language as a bridge, broaden the paths of inheritance, and realize the dual values of "empowering the inheritance of the Yellow River culture through teaching" and "enriching the connotation of teaching with the Yellow River culture."

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## 2. Literature Review

The Yellow River culture constitutes a vital component of China's fine traditional culture. From the perspective of research trends (Figure 1), the number of publications on Yellow River culture research remained at a low level for a long time before 2018, then rose rapidly after 2018, reached its peak in 2022, and maintained a high level in 2025, thus emerging as a research hotspot in academic circles.

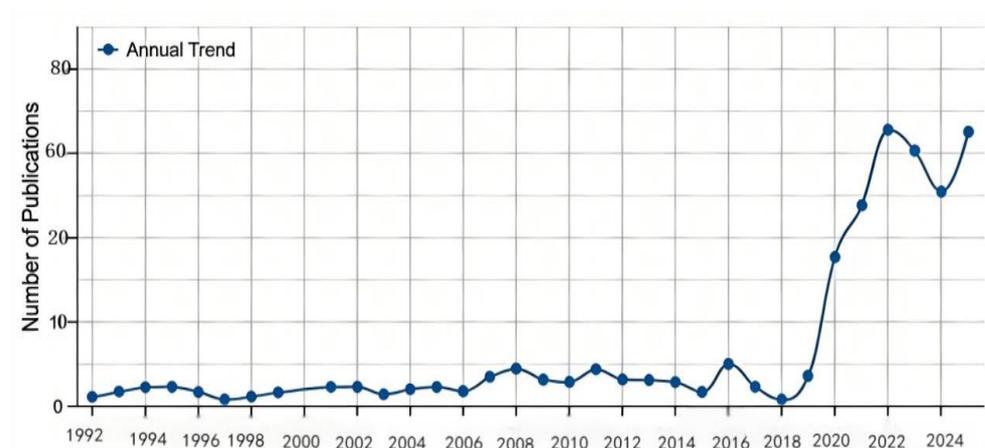


Figure 1. Trend of Annual Publications on Yellow River Culture Research (1992-2024).

Existing studies can be divided into three dimensions. First, from the perspective of regional development, empirical studies employing panel data and quantitative modeling techniques have focused on issues such as resource utilization, environmental governance, and low-carbon transformation in the Yellow River Basin, thereby revealing patterns of regional development and policy mechanisms [1,2]. In the international academic community, cultural heritage is also increasingly regarded as an endogenous driving force of regional sustainable development. For example, previous research has highlighted that cultural heritage plays a critical role in regional economic transformation by linking cultural value with economic value, particularly in river basin civilizations and historically continuous cultural regions [3]. Second, from the perspective of strategic pathways, existing studies-aligned with the goals of China's 15th Five-Year Plan-have proposed development strategies centered on green transformation and industrial innovation, emphasizing that the integration of multiple benefits should be achieved through comprehensive protection and coordinated governance to support the Chinese path to modernization [4]. Similarly, existing research has emphasized that integrated governance strategies are essential for balancing cultural preservation, economic development, and social sustainability, particularly in regions characterized by abundant intangible cultural heritage resources [5]. Third, from the perspective of industrial integration, existing research has indicated that, in the context of high-quality tourism development, cultural connotation has become a core source of competitiveness, and that the development of Yellow River cultural intellectual property (IP) is critical for enabling Henan's tourism industry to move beyond traditional development models [6].

All the above studies are based on the core logic of "cultural protection and economic transformation", yet they fail to involve the "cross-border integration of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) inheritance and language teaching", and relevant explorations still remain blank.

Research on Korean language teaching has primarily focused on three key directions. First, with respect to innovation in teaching models, existing studies-drawing on the Basic Korean Course-have examined the application value of flipped classroom approaches in college-level Korean instruction, offering practical insights for improving teaching quality [7].

Second, with respect to reforms in translation pedagogy, existing research based on language-specific second-language translation teaching experiments has revealed that learners demonstrate patterns of reverse transfer in grammatical item recognition, thereby enriching theoretical understandings of translation instruction [8].

Third, as for the exploration of cultural integration, most existing achievements focus on Sino-Korean shared cultures. For instance, existing research has demonstrated the facilitating role of cultural content in Korean language instruction by examining the connections and distinctions between Chinese and Korean tea cultures [9]. In a similar vein, existing research has proposed a systematic mechanism for integrating tea culture into Korean language teaching practices, thereby promoting the coordinated development of cultural instruction and language learning [10]. From the perspective of second language acquisition theory, existing research has proposed the concept of intercultural communicative competence, emphasizing that foreign language teaching should balance the integration of learners' local culture and the target culture in order to foster intercultural awareness and cultural mediation abilities [11-13].

However, existing research on cultural integration is confined to single thematic areas and has not extended to systematic fine traditional Chinese cultures with distinct regional identities—a typical example being Yellow River culture. As a result, such research can hardly satisfy the dual needs of Korean language teaching, namely, cross-cultural communication and local cultural dissemination.

In summary, both research on Yellow River culture and research on Korean language teaching have yielded substantial achievements. Moreover, they have established mature research frameworks based on the "Cultural Heritage Theory" and the "Second Language Acquisition Theory" respectively. However, cross-border integration research between these two fields remains untouched.

The diversified inheritance of Yellow River culture requires language teaching as a carrier, while the connotative upgrading of Korean language teaching also needs the empowerment of excellent local culture. Therefore, this paper focuses on the integration path of Yellow River culture and Korean language teaching, which is not only an innovative exploration of the inheritance mode of Yellow River culture, but also a beneficial supplement to the reform of Korean language teaching.

To further elaborate, the integration of Yellow River culture into Korean language teaching can break the existing limitations of single-theme cultural integration in Korean teaching, enrich the cultural connotation of teaching content, and help achieve the dual goals of cross-cultural communication and local cultural dissemination. Meanwhile, relying on the mature research framework of Korean language teaching can also provide a new practical path for the diversified inheritance of Yellow River culture, promoting the innovative development of both fields.

### **3. Construction of an Integration Mechanism in the Cross-Cultural Context**

#### *3.1. Theoretical Framework and Resource Transformation*

Based on the core demands of "two-way cultural empathy" and "cultural symbol transformation" in the Cross-Cultural Communication Theory, and combined with the phased characteristics of college Korean language teaching, this study constructs a three-dimensional integration mechanism of "Pedagogical Transformation of Cultural Content-Classroom Embedding-Practical Dissemination". This mechanism not only achieves the in-depth integration of Yellow River culture into Korean language teaching, but also promotes the cross-cultural dissemination of Yellow River culture through language teaching, forming a closed loop of "teaching empowering cultural dissemination and culture enriching teaching connotation".

The integration of culture and language in the cross-cultural context first requires the "teaching-oriented and cross-cultural" transformation of cultural resources to avoid disconnection between cultural content and language teaching. Following the three-

dimensional principles of "cultural representativeness, teaching adaptability, and cross-cultural communicability", priority is given to selecting content from Yellow River culture that both possesses local recognition and shared cultural empathy points between China and South Korea—such as Yellow River Work Songs (folk rhythm), Bian Embroidery (traditional craftsmanship), Yellow River Myths (oral literature), and Sino-Korean shared folk customs (e.g., the connection between the Dragon Boat Race on the Yellow River Basin during the Dragon Boat Festival and the South Korean Dano Festival). This not only ensures the purity of the cultural core but also provides materials for cross-cultural comparison.

### 3.2. Cognitive Compatibility and Modular Decomposition

The Korean expression system for the core concepts of Yellow River culture is refined, and the *Handbook of Core Korean Vocabulary for Yellow River Culture* is compiled. For example, the term "Yellow River Work Songs" was rendered through phonetic transliteration accompanied by explanatory cultural notes, while "Bian Embroidery" was translated using an English-equivalent term aligned with the established terminology of South Korean embroidery traditions. This approach facilitates clearer cross-linguistic interpretation of culture-specific concepts.

It is further necessary to base on the cognitive laws of language acquisition, explore the cognitive compatibility points between specific cultural elements and language knowledge points, decompose cultural content into modules suitable for different teaching stages, and promote the accurate matching of cultural elements and language knowledge points from superficial superposition to in-depth linkage. Cultural content is decomposed into modules suitable for different teaching stages. For instance, the rhythmic patterns of Yellow River Work Songs correspond to Korean pronunciation and intonation training. Specifically, the alternation of strong and weak beats and the rise and fall of rhythm align cognitively with the core intonation variation rules of Korean intonation, helping learners establish a "rhythm perception-speech imitation" connection, rather than achieving a mere superficial overlay of content. In addition, the narrative structure of Yellow River Myths can be integrated into logical training in Korean writing, realizing the precise matching of cultural content with language knowledge points. Its "cause-development-climax-conclusion" narrative sequence can serve as a concrete vehicle for the logical framework of Korean writing, aligning with learners' cognitive progression from the concrete to the abstract, and lowering the threshold for understanding abstract writing logic.

### 3.3. Phased Embedding in Classroom Teaching

Combining with the progressive training law of Korean language teaching ("Basic Introduction - Ability Improvement - Comprehensive Application"), the in-depth embedding of Yellow River culture and language teaching is realized in phases, with the simultaneous infiltration of cross-cultural communication competence training. Yellow River culture elements are integrated into Korean pronunciation, vocabulary, and basic grammar teaching to reduce the abstractness of language learning. The strong and weak syllable rhythms of Yellow River Work Songs are used to assist Korean intonation training, enabling students to master the differences between rising and falling tones in Korean while imitating the rhythm of the work songs.

With the support of visual materials depicting cultural relics from the Yellow River region, associative learning of noun-adjective combinations was implemented. Learners connected culturally specific artifacts with descriptive adjectives to reinforce both cultural understanding and vocabulary acquisition. Focusing on the three core competencies of Korean conversation, translation, and writing, cross-cultural teaching scenarios with the theme of Yellow River culture are constructed. Through the cognitive correspondence of "physical object characteristics-linguistic description", students can accumulate

vocabulary while simultaneously achieving cultural cognition, thus realizing the synchronous internalization of language acquisition and cultural perception (As shown in Table 1).

**Table 1.** A Streamlined Lesson Plan of Yellow River Culture Physical Cases for Korean Language Teaching (1 Class Period/50 Minutes).

Module	Core Content	Implementation Details	Assessment Focus / Objective
Teaching Target	Korean beginner learners with basic nouns, adjectives, and simple sentence patterns	Learners can name, describe, and make simple comparisons of cultural objects	Baseline linguistic and intercultural readiness
Core Materials	Physical-object-based cultural artifacts (Dengni Inkstone, Bian Embroidery)	Use high-resolution images to support object-language mapping	Object-language cognitive alignment
Cognitive Warm-up (5 min)	Object display + vocabulary recall	Review key adjectives (e.g., 'hard', 'beautiful') through guided questions	Recognition of object-word correspondence
Core Practice (25 min)	Vocabulary consolidation + pair task	Students describe objects and conduct simple cross-cultural comparisons in pairs	Application of linguistic forms in intercultural context
Assessment & Feedback (15 min)	Performance-based evaluation with rubric	Assess accuracy, object-language match, and clarity of comparison	Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) assessment
Wrap-up & Transfer (5 min)	Logic review + micro-task	Assign a short object-description task for a new cultural item	Transfer and consolidation of intercultural skills

In conversational instruction, situational dialogue tasks were designed around culturally themed topics, such as introductions to Yellow River culture and discussions of differences between Chinese and Korean folk customs. Through these guided exchanges, learners practiced comparing cultural traditions and articulating similarities and differences, thereby strengthening their cross-cultural communicative competence. By relying on the cognitive empathy points of shared folk customs between China and South Korea, students can accurately grasp the contextual adaptability of linguistic expressions in dialogues, thereby enhancing the precision of language application in cross-cultural communication.

In translation teaching, texts such as introductions to Yellow River myths and the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) craftsmanship are selected for Sino-Korean mutual translation, focusing on optimizing translation strategies for culture-specific terms such as "Mother Yellow River" and "Hetu Luoshu". By examining cultural cognitive differences between China and South Korea, we analyze the logic of semantic transmission to achieve the dual goals of linguistic accuracy and equivalent transmission of cultural connotations.

In writing teaching, topics such as "Yellow River Civilization in My Eyes" and "Comparison of Sino-Korean Water Culture" are set, requiring students to balance the accuracy of language and the depth of cultural interpretation. With the cognitive reserve of Yellow River culture as the support, cultural cognition, writing logic, and linguistic expression form a two-way empowerment, thereby consolidating the cognitive closed loop of "content input- in-class training- practical output".

### *3.4. Construction of a Three-Level Practical Dissemination System*

The achievements of classroom teaching need to be transformed into cross-cultural communication momentum for Yellow River culture through practice. A three-level practical system of "On-Campus Practice - School-Local Collaboration - International Dissemination" is constructed to realize the unification of language application and cultural dissemination. Inheritors of Yellow River ICH are invited to campus to carry out workshops on "Interpreting ICH Crafts in Korean", allowing students to ask inheritors questions in Korean and record the craft processes, completing the initial practice of "cultural understanding - language transformation".

"Korean Speech Contest on Yellow River Culture" and "ICH-Themed Korean Cultural and Creative Design Exhibition" are held to enhance students' enthusiasm for cross-cultural expression through competitions. Cooperations are established with ICH protection centers and cultural tourism scenic spots in the Yellow River Basin to organize students to carry out internships as "Korean volunteer interpreters", providing Korean guided tour services for international tourists on Yellow River culture. Relying on local cultural tourism projects, students participate in the writing of Korean copy and dubbing of short videos for the international promotion of Yellow River culture, realizing the synergy between teaching practice and local cultural dissemination.

Students are guided to form groups to create Korean posters and popular science short videos on the theme of Yellow River ICH, which are released through South Korean social platforms (Naver Blog, Instagram) and Sino-Korean exchange platforms in colleges and universities. With the help of channels such as Sino-Korean exchange student programs and international cultural forums, "Korean Sharing Sessions on Yellow River Culture" are carried out, making students the core carriers of the cross-cultural dissemination of Yellow River culture and constructing a long-term closed loop of "Teaching - Practice - Dissemination".

### *3.5. Conclusion and Significance*

In summary, both research on Yellow River culture and research on Korean language teaching have yielded substantial achievements. Moreover, they have established mature research frameworks based on the "Cultural Heritage Theory" and the "Second Language Acquisition Theory" respectively. However, cross-border integration research between these two fields remains untouched. The diversified inheritance of Yellow River culture requires language teaching as a carrier, while the connotative upgrading of Korean language teaching also needs the empowerment of excellent local culture. Therefore, this paper focuses on the integration path of Yellow River culture and Korean language teaching, which is not only an innovative exploration of the inheritance mode of Yellow River culture, but also a beneficial supplement to the reform of Korean language teaching.

To further elaborate, the integration of Yellow River culture into Korean language teaching can break the existing limitations of single-theme cultural integration in Korean teaching, enrich the cultural connotation of teaching content, and help achieve the dual goals of cross-cultural communication and local cultural dissemination. Meanwhile, relying on the mature research framework of Korean language teaching can also provide a new practical path for the diversified inheritance of Yellow River culture, promoting the innovative development of both fields.

## **4. Discussion**

The research finds that the integration of Yellow River culture and college Korean language teaching has inherent adaptability and dual values. This study analyzes the implications of the constructed mechanism from the following dimensions:

#### *4.1. Dual Values of Teaching and Dissemination*

From the teaching perspective, Yellow River culture provides rich localized and contextualized teaching materials for Korean language teaching, which can effectively address the imbalance in traditional Korean teaching of "emphasizing Korean cultural input while neglecting local cultural output". It helps students establish local cultural confidence while mastering language skills. From the cultural dissemination perspective, college Korean language teaching builds a youth carrier for the cross-cultural dissemination of Yellow River culture. Relying on their Korean language proficiency, students can become "bridge-type" envoys for the international dissemination of Yellow River culture, broaden the international dissemination boundary of Yellow River culture, and achieve a win-win situation of "improving language teaching quality" and "empowering cultural inheritance".

#### *4.2. Mechanism of Phased Integration*

The phased and hierarchical integration mechanism can realize the in-depth integration of culture and language teaching. The three-dimensional integration mechanism of "Pedagogical Transformation of Cultural Content - Classroom Embedding - Practical Dissemination" follows the teaching law of Korean language ("Basic Introduction - Ability Improvement - Comprehensive Application"), realizing the closed-loop implementation of Yellow River culture from "teaching-oriented transformation" to "in-class integration" and then to "dissemination in practice". Among them, the pedagogical transformation of cultural content and transformation mechanism solves the connection problem between cultural resources and teaching scenarios; the phased classroom embedding mechanism ensures the synchronous improvement of language ability and cultural literacy; and the cross-cultural practical dissemination mechanism breaks down the barrier from the teaching field to the social dissemination field, extending the integration effect from the classroom to a broader cultural dissemination scenario.

#### *4.3. Cross-Cultural Empathy as the Core Guide*

Integration practice should be guided by cross-cultural empathy as the core. The integration of Yellow River culture and Korean language teaching is not a simple superposition of "cultural content + language knowledge points", but guided by the Cross-Cultural Communication Theory. Through the design of Sino-Korean cultural comparison (e.g., the folk custom connection between the Yellow River Dragon Boat Race and the South Korean Dano Festival), it cultivates students' cross-cultural cognitive and empathetic abilities, enabling them to not only understand the connotation of Korean culture but also accurately interpret the unique value of Yellow River culture, thus laying a solid foundation for in-depth Sino-Korean cultural exchanges.

### **5. Conclusion**

#### *5.1. Summary of Findings*

Against the contemporary backdrop of cross-cultural communication, and drawing on Cultural Heritage Theory and Second Language Acquisition Theory, this study systematically constructs a three-dimensional integration mechanism linking Yellow River culture with college-level Korean language teaching. This framework is designed to address two interrelated challenges: the insufficient integration of local cultural connotations in current Korean language instruction at the tertiary level, and the limited modes of cross-cultural dissemination of Yellow River cultural heritage.

### 5.2. Limitations and Future Research

Although this study has constructed an integration mechanism and designed practical paths for integrating Yellow River culture into college Korean language teaching, it still has certain limitations.

Firstly, there are limitations in the integrated content and empirical data. Focusing on explicit Yellow River culture such as intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and folk customs, the study conducts limited discussion on the transformation of implicit culture (e.g., philosophical thoughts) into Korean language teaching. Furthermore, the argumentation lacks support from survey data, making it difficult to fully verify the dual value of "optimizing language teaching and empowering cultural communication," and thus its persuasiveness needs to be improved.

Secondly, the discussion on implementation adaptability and obstacles is insufficient. The study does not involve colleges and universities of different levels and regions, resulting in inadequate universality; meanwhile, it overlooks implementation obstacles such as the additional workload of teachers in integrated teaching and the difficulty in acquiring authentic bilingual materials on Yellow River culture.

Future research will expand the integration dimension of explicit and implicit culture, select multiple universities of different types to conduct research for strengthening empirical evidence; at the same time, it will optimize practical paths, sort out obstacle response strategies, and construct a multi-dimensional evaluation system to enhance the practicality of the research results.

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